

Canine Breeding Goals and Plans

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Client Educational Handout

This information is aimed more towards a client who has already decided that they are wanting to breed and they understand the risks, costs, and commitment to breeding their dog.

So what is the next step..... We need to consider why we are truly wanting to breed.

What are your breeding goals and what are your plans to achieve them?

Breeders should have an idea of why they are breeding before starting to breed any dogs.

For example, is our goal to produce the next Akc Westminster champion, or are we breeding for a working dog, a hunting dog, a companion, a competition dog, a race dog, a service dog, a police or military working dog, or a dog for personal protection?

Or.....

Are you breeding to preserve the genetics of your favorite loved one? Are you breeding to change the confirmation or structure of a breed? Are you creating a new breed? Are you breeding for some other particular characteristic or trait? Are you breeding a new trend breed? Are you trying to create a new trend?

What is your vision?

If your plan is to breed for monetary gains, you may reconsider the ethical dilemma of over population and potentially amplifying unwanted genes and health issues by uninformed and uneducated breeding tactics. Most clients will universally agree that there is little to no money to be gained from breeding dogs, most costs will

Gender:

Do we have a male or female, or both?

Are you trying to produce a stud dog? A breeding bitch? Will they all be under the same roof? Will the males and or females get along if they're all under the same roof? Do you have an ideal location and set up to whelp puppies? Are you only able to buy a dog with part of your desired genetics either due to cost or availability? Will it take several generations to obtain your dream dog? Are the genetics held by someone in a different part of the world? Do you have a male with genetics that you're hoping to get a female with similar or the same genetics (or vice versa) so it will require you to breed and get a pup back? Are you looking to sell the offspring? Are you looking to place offspring in homes for showing or breeding?

Are you hoping to eventually have the perfect stud to campaign? How many dogs do you have, and what is the maximum number that you should/can have in your possession? Do you have guardian homes to own more dogs? What are your retirement plans for the breeding stock? Will you spay them and rehome them to a particular family, or will you keep them until they die from old age? Will you continue to provide care and cover expenses after they retire and are rehomed? How do you plan to watch and observe her or his health as they age, which will have significance to the offspring buyers? Do you have a way to prevent unwanted pregnancies? Are there males and females intact in the house that may have unwanted breedings and what would your Plan B if this occurs?

Other things to consider and plan for.....

Puppies:

What will happen if you produce puppies that do not sell? What will happen if you produce puppies with health issues that need surgical interventions, including corneal dermoids, entropions, hernias, cleft palates, and other minor defects? What are your plans if you produce puppies with major deformities such as blindness, deafness, ambulatory, and physical defects that affect the mobility? What are your plans if you produce puppies with cardiovascular defects?

There are many things to consider when planning steps to achieve your vision, and the questions above are a few of the many.

There are many other questions to consider when deciding when to breed. A very common question we often get is.....

How many times should I breed my female?

This is a great question, and there is no one single answer for all dogs.

Things that that we should consider when thinking through our breeding goals and plans:

- What is our breeding goal/s?
- How many puppies should she produce based on all the information we have?
- What is the market for the offspring?
- How big are her average litter sizes, (or how big were her mom's or littermates litter sizes)?
- Have her puppies been healthy in her previous litters?
- Are they usually a congruent size or are some really big and some really small?
- How old was she when you started breeding was she used for showing did breeding start after she was two years old to finish all of her health testing first?
- How is she as a mother?
- Do the puppies suck all of the life out of her?
- Is she happy to nurse the puppies and stimulate them to go potty?
- How long does it take her to recover after weaning the puppies?
- Does she have problems with involution and healing after birth birthing?

- Does she typically get mastitis or any other health issues while and weaning?

Typically, it is desirable to breed a bitch 3 to 5 litters in her lifetime, obviously sometimes less, and sometimes more depending on the answers to all the questions above. Interesting to note, progesterone has an inflammatory response on the uterus. Current research suggests that every heat cycle has severe detrimental and degenerative effects on the female's uterus due to the high levels of progesterone. It doesn't seem to matter whether she gets bred and has a litter or not, the uterus deteriorates with each heat. Because of this, it should be assumed a female should yield larger and healthier litters as she is younger, mostly between her second and seventh heat cycle. She will often begin to have smaller and unhealthier puppies and litter sizes after her 7th heat cycle as normal deterioration with aging. Are you ordering what is a maiden bitch?